

State of the Heart for African-Americans

Cardiovascular Disease in South Carolina



Burden of Disease:

- In the United States, over 100,000 African-Americans die each year from cardiovascular disease (CVD), which includes heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, and other diseases of the circulatory system.
- CVD is South Carolina's leading killer for both men and women in all racial and ethnic groups. In 2002, 3,885 African-Americans died from CVD in South Carolina.
- African-Americans face higher risks of developing ischemic heart disease, and suffer stroke deaths more often than do Caucasians. These higher illness rates result in ten years of lost life for African-Americans in South Carolina, and a stroke rate that is 50 percent higher than the national average.
- Heart disease and stroke accounted for 11,012 hospitalizations in 2002 for African-American South Carolinians, with a total hospitalization cost of more than \$279 million.

Risk Factors for South Carolinians:

Smoking

- Cigarette smokers have a 70 percent higher chance of dying of heart disease than nonsmokers.
- One out of four African-Americans in South Carolina smokes.

Overweight

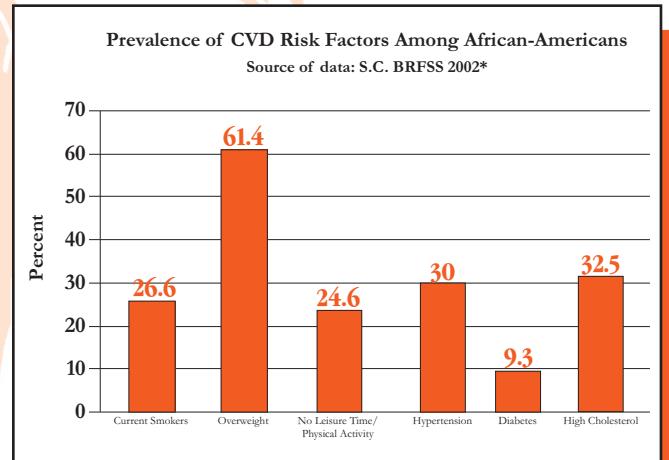
- Being overweight contributes to 32 percent of heart disease deaths each year.
- Two out of three African-Americans in South Carolina is overweight or obese. For African-American women, the number is two out of three.

Sedentary Lifestyle

- Less active, less physically fit persons have a 30 to 50 percent greater risk of developing high blood pressure.
- When it comes to physical activity, two out of three African-Americans are either inactive or are not regularly active.
- Physical inactivity is more common among African-American women than men.

Hypertension (High Blood Pressure)

- People with hypertension (high blood pressure) have three to four times the risk of developing heart disease than those without high blood pressure.
- One in three African-Americans in South Carolina has high blood pressure.



* South Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey

Diabetes

- Two-thirds of people with diabetes die of heart disease or stroke.
- One of out 9 African-American adults in South Carolina lives with diabetes, which is approximately double the rate for Caucasian adults.

High Cholesterol

- Lowering blood cholesterol results in a twofold reduction of heart disease risk.
- One out of three African-Americans in South Carolina has high blood cholesterol.

Estimated Economic Cost of CVD in the United States in 2002

\$199.5 billion in direct costs (i.e., physicians, hospital, medications)

\$129.7 billion in indirect costs (i.e., loss in productivity)

Stroke Among African-Americans in South Carolina



Burden of Disease for South Carolinians:

- Stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States.
- South Carolina leads the nation in stroke death rates and is among a group of Southeastern states with high stroke death rates that is referred to as the “Stroke Belt.”
- Stroke is the third leading cause of death for African-Americans in South Carolina, resulting in 925 deaths in 2000. African-Americans are more than 40 percent more likely to die from stroke than Caucasians in South Carolina.
- Stroke resulted in 4,212 hospitalizations of African-Americans in South Carolina during 2002.

Modifiable Risk Factors for Stroke:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Cigarette smoking
- Poor eating habits
- Diabetes
- Physical inactivity

WARNING SIGNS OF STROKE:

- Sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg on one side of the body.
- Loss of speech, or trouble talking or understanding speech.
- Sudden dimness or loss of vision, particularly in one eye.
- Unexplained dizziness, unsteadiness or sudden falls, with no previous symptoms.
- Sudden, severe headaches with no known cause.

How to Reduce Your Risk of Stroke:

- Get your blood pressure checked.
- Stay active.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Use less salt.
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation.
- Get your cholesterol level checked.
- Stay smoke-free.

Economic Cost of Stroke:

- Hospitalization costs for stroke totaled more than \$90 million for African-American South Carolinians in 2002.
- The total cost of stroke in the United States for 2002 is estimated at \$49.4 billion (both direct and indirect costs).

For more information on cardiovascular disease prevention in South Carolina, contact:

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Information for this fact sheet was obtained from S.C. BRFSS, S.C. Vital Records, S.C. Hospital Discharge Data, the American Heart Association, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control